

Before his passing, Fred said of Carolyn, "She was invaluable. Couldn't ask for a better supporter and a partner and a helper and sustainer."

Fred's daughter Rebecca was one of my House Pages and is now a member of my staff, and her sister, Joy, interned for me in 1996. I know the pain myself of losing a father at about their age, but they should have much comfort in knowing how loved and admired their dad was by everyone and how proud he was of their own accomplishments.

Fred was very devoted to his family, and he will be greatly missed by Carolyn, Joy, and Rebecca, as well as his daughter, Katherine; grandchildren Drew and Caroline; mother, Harriet; and sister, Jane.

Madam Speaker, I urge my Colleagues and other readers of the RECORD to join me in celebrating the extraordinary life of Major General Fred Forster. His life and accomplishments are without comparison, and he will forever be an example to all those who knew him.

#### OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

#### HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 14, 2010*

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Madam Speaker, today our national debt is \$13,848,017,156,749.09.

On January 6th, 2009, the start of the 111th Congress, the national debt was \$10,638,425,746,293.80.

This means the national debt has increased by \$3,209,591,410,455.20 so far this Congress.

This debt and its interest payments we are passing to our children and all future Americans.

#### IN HONOR AND RECOGNITION OF CLEVELANDPEOPLE.COM

#### HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 14, 2010*

Mr. KUCINICH. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the developers and sponsors of ClevelandPeople.com on their recognition at the American Nationalities Movement's Christmas Luncheon. ClevelandPeople.com was selected for this honor because of the website's crucial role in supporting the social life and cultural richness of the city.

Founded in 1959 by Ralph Perk, the American Nationalities Movement consists of representatives of over 50 nationalities in the Cleveland area that come together to celebrate their unique heritages. Each year during its Christmas Luncheon, it recognizes individuals and groups that have contributed to supporting ethnic groups and celebrating diversity.

Debbie, Dan, and Pat Hanson formed ClevelandPeople.com in 2001 when they decided to condense information about local cultural events and support services onto a few web pages. Over the past nine years, it has

grown into a social hub connecting 64 different groups and receiving thousands of views each day. The website's developers explain that supporting Cleveland's distinct ethnic communities is important not only for maintaining the cultural wealth of the city, but for ensuring its economic prosperity. Cleveland has always been strengthened by its diversity.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, please join me in congratulating ClevelandPeople.com on their recognition at the American Nationalities Movement's Christmas Luncheon. Their creative and spirit and their devotion for their community continues to support for the cultural diversity that makes this city great.

#### HONORING CHARLES MENG OF NAPA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

#### HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 14, 2010*

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Charles Meng, who is being honored this evening on the occasion of his retirement after 20 years of service on the Napa Valley College Board of Trustees. Mr. Meng is retiring from the board to serve as a commissioner on the Accrediting Commission of Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

Charles has dedicated his life to serving his country and his community. He graduated from West Point in 1957 and was a commissioned officer in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. He went on to serve as a senior engineer manager in the U.S. Navy's nuclear submarine program. He is completing his fifth four-year term on the Napa Valley College Board of Trustees and was also elected to the Association of Community Colleges Trustees Board in 2004. He has served on many community college accreditation teams and is an expert on community college governance. Charles was the NVC Board's representative on a number of critical college committees, including the Technology Plan Development, Napa River Flood Control project and Mare Island Naval Shipyard closure. He was also on the committees to hire three college presidents.

As the current president and longest serving member of the board, Charles is admired and respected by the entire campus as well as the community at large. An engineer by trade, he is known as a highly intelligent, focused and analytical leader. He is a consensus builder but will not budge on his commitment to preserving access to higher education for all. One of the ways he has demonstrated this commitment is by serving on my service academy review panel, interviewing young people from my district seeking nomination to our Nation's service academies. As a West Point graduate himself, Mr. Meng's insights and experiences serving our country were invaluable in this process. Due to his guidance and support, many were able to fulfill their dream of serving our country as he has.

Madam Speaker and colleagues, it is appropriate at this time that we thank Mr. Charles Meng for the incredible work he has done on behalf of the students of Napa Valley College and for the work he will undoubtedly continue

to do. Napa Valley College is a premier institution for higher learning and will remain that way due in large part to his efforts. I join his family and everyone in the Napa Valley College Community in wishing him continued success and fulfillment.

#### THE PUBLIC EMPLOYEE PENSION TRANSPARENCY ACT (H.R. 6484)

#### HON. DEVIN NUNES

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 14, 2010*

Mr. NUNES. Madam Speaker, I rise today to discuss the Public Employee Pension Transparency Act, H.R. 6484, which I introduced on December 2, 2010, with the Gentleman from Wisconsin, Mr. RYAN, and the Gentleman from California, Mr. ISSA. This legislation is designed to enhance the soundness of State and local employee pension benefit plans by providing them the incentives necessary for State and local governments to provide the American people with meaningful disclosure of the value of these plans' assets and liabilities.

State and local governments have promised pension benefits to about 20 million active public employees and another seven million retirees and dependents. According to the states, these pension promises are underfunded by about \$1 trillion. However, this enormous number fails to accurately convey the true magnitude of the cost taxpayers will bear to meet these obligations. Moreover, as a result of a lack of transparency and generous accounting standards, the vast majority of the American people are unaware that their State and local governments collectively owe trillions of dollars for generous public employee pension benefits.

Unlike private pension plans, public employee pension plans are allowed to use unreasonably high discount rates to calculate their liabilities. In fact, many use unrealistic expected rates of returns on their plan assets, the value of which is often inflated, to discount their pension liabilities. Many economists maintain that these practices are misguided and hide the fact that State and local government pension plans are collectively underfunded by more than \$3.8 trillion.

The Public Employee Pension Transparency Act would address this serious situation by requiring State and local government pension plans to disclose the true magnitude of their liabilities to the American people. The bill would condition the continuation of specified Federal tax benefits upon State and local governments' decision to file certain information regarding their pension plans with the Secretary of the Treasury. This information, which would reveal the true extent of public pension debt, would be available to the public through a searchable Web site.

Over the course of the past several years, we have seen trillions of taxpayer funds spent to bailout banks, auto companies, Wall Street, homeowners, and others. The American people are infuriated by these bailouts and are insisting that they end. State and local governments, with their trillions of dollars in hidden public employee pension debt, are next in line. It is time for them to reveal the true cost of their pension promises and to take that action